



Sex Worker's Outreach Project - Tucson

www.swop-tucson.org

*Please Join Us December 17, 2009 for the
International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers
Event in Tucson, Arizona!*

November 11, 2009

Dear Friends & Supporters of Sex Worker's Rights:

In 2009, sex workers from around the globe met gruesome deaths and endured unspeakable violence. Some died at the hands of a solitary perpetrator; others were victims of serial "prostitute killers." While some of these horrific stories received international media attention ([Boston](#), [Grand Rapids](#), [Albuquerque](#), [Tijuana](#), [Cape Town](#), [New Zealand](#) just to name a few), other cases received little more than a perfunctory investigation. Many cases remain unresolved, sometimes forever.

In fact, most violent crimes against sex workers remain unreported. Stigma and criminalization facilitate this violence; when sex work is criminalized, prostitutes can't turn to the police for protection without risking prosecution themselves. Sex workers remain one of the largest marginalized populations in existence without the benefit of the basic civil rights that everyone else takes for granted.

Each year, December 17th marks the International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers. Last year's event in Washington, D.C. was a big success and this year, sex workers and their allies from across the U.S. will gather together in Tucson, Arizona to remember and honor sex workers who have been victimized by virtue of their chosen profession - including rape, assault and murder.

You are invited to join us on December 17, 2009 in Tucson, Arizona to honor the memories of the fallen. (A schedule of events is at the end of this letter). This year is especially poignant for us in Arizona because in May, 2009, Marcia Powell, an inmate at the Perryville women's prison outside of Phoenix who was serving 27 months for prostitution, died when she was left outside in a holding cage in 107 degree heat without shade, food or water. Marcia Powell's death is not only a travesty of justice and a failure of the prison system, but of the unjust laws which continue to oppress sex workers everywhere. We are outraged and saddened by both the loss of freedom and of lives, and we ask for your participation in putting an end to the violence.

To learn more about the IDEVASW, [please click here](#).

Here's How You Can Help

Please join us in honoring sex workers who have fallen victim to the travesties of violence and injustice. You can:

1. Attend the IDEVASW event in Tucson, Arizona on December 17th; we have plenty of resources for free housing and transportation.
2. If you can't join us in Tucson, organize your own IDEVASW event in your hometown.
3. If you're a business who'd like to help the Tucson event by sponsorship, please contact info@swop-tucson.org. We need both money and volunteers.
4. Circulate this letter to your own listservs and use social media to get the word out - blog about this, add this letter to your website, Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, etc.
5. Donate to the Sex Workers Outreach Project. Visit <http://swop-usa.org> to find out more.

If silence is the voice of complicity, then your presence in Arizona on December 17th would be a powerful message for justice to be heard across the world. Thank you.

In Solidarity,

Sex Workers Outreach Project - USA

Sex Workers Outreach Project -Tucson

For more event information, please visit: <http://swop-tucson.org>

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IDEVASW Event Schedule - Tucson, Arizona

Volunteers are still needed – please contact info@swop-tucson.org!

December 17, 2009

5:00 – 6:00 p.m. “No Human Involved” Event

El Presidio Park, 160 West Alameda Street, Tucson, AZ.

Performance art/art installation with the theme, “No Human Involved.” The central image will be a physical representation of the Perryville Prison which will honor Marcia Powell and sex workers everywhere who have been victims of violence; a performance piece/die-in and live music.

6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. “Remembrance Memorial”

El Tiradito Shrine, 354 South Main Avenue, Tucson, AZ.

Join us in remembering and honoring sex worker who have been victims of violence. Live music, performance poetry, ritual, candlelight vigil and refreshments. El Tiradito is a national historic shrine dedicated to the “castaway sinner” and holds a special place in the hearts of Tucson sex workers.

December 18, 2009

(Pending) Political Rally at the downtown Phoenix offices of the Director of the Arizona Department of Corrections to protest current anti-prostitution laws and prison conditions. Did you know that in Arizona, a fourth conviction is a mandatory Class 5 felony with 180 days of prison for consensual sex between a client and a sex worker? Please visit <http://swop-tucson.org> for more details. Volunteers are needed to organize this day!